

TRAPS TO CATCH FARMERS.

Dr. Henry Wallace on Moth Traps, Dilution Separators, Mining and Oil Stock, and Get-Rich-Quick Schemes in General.

The country is being quite thoroughly canvassed by agents who wish to sell different classes of traps and things and we are simply discharging the duty which we undertake when we demand cash in advance for subscriptions and stop when the time is out in giving our readers time is out, in giving our readers which will do them no good and inevitably do them harm.

We advise our readers to beware of the moth trap agent. There are many farmers who know enough of bugs and things to understand that they damage fruit trees and need to be kept in check. They do not know that we have friends among the insects as well as foes; that the great Creator established a balance which if not interfered with would reduce insect depredations to the minimum. Man has interfered with it and, therefore, he suffers. The moth trap will catch moths, but it will catch all kinds of moths that lay the eggs that produce the insects, and, therefore, will do as much harm as good, and it is said by those who have investigated the matter that it does even more. We do not want to wage an indiscriminate war against insects but against our insect foes. The moth trap is a good deal like an Irishman, it hits a moth wherever it sees it and is as likely to hit a friend as a foe. Leave these moth traps alone.

Our friends should beware of the man who sells the dilution separator. We have in times past clearly and distinctly stated the facts with reference to this separator. It is not a separator at all in the true sense of the word. The name "separator" is used for the purpose of deception. It is for this reason that we exclude them from our advertising columns and have done so for years. Most other agricultural papers have admitted them, but we do not feel that we can do so because we would thereby be deceiving our readers. These separators are no better than the shotgun can. The only possible advantage they are in case the farmer has three or four cows and wants the cream for family use from all which about two of them should give and by pouring cold water into the warm milk can throw up part of the cream very quickly and churn it for present use. Even here, however, he would do just as well to put milk in any other can, take it to the pump, and fill it half full of water and then skim off the portion of cream that rises quickly to the top. There is no sense in paying a large price for the privilege of putting cold water into warm milk. Our grandmothers did that long ago and paid no agent for the privilege of doing so. Leave all these alone.

The farmer should beware of the men who wish to sell him mining stock or oil stock. There is plenty

of gold in the mountains and there are legitimate mines; there is oil in the bowels of the earth and there are legitimate ways of getting it out. Wherever oil is found anywhere in the world, capital by the millions is ready to take it out. This is legitimate mining. Illegitimate mining consists in working the farmers by selling them stock instead of working the mine to secure the gold or silver. The farmer's business is farming. He seldom has so much money that he can afford to give the control of it to some one else. The minority interest in any corporation is seldom a safe thing. The minority in a mining company is in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred absolutely worthless. Companies that sell stock are aiming in most cases to get gold, or its equivalent, out of the farmer and not out of the mine. The same is true of oil. Let all these severely alone. Put your money into better fences, into tile drains, into better buildings, into another farm; put it anywhere, provided it is within your control and in the line of your general business.

Beware of men who try to sell you agricultural lands very much west of the 98th meridian. There are good lands in special locations west of that meridian, there are bad lands east of it, but, speaking generally, the 98th meridian, or a line reaching from the west end of the Gulf of Mexico straight north, is the limit of diversified agriculture. There are good grazing lands west of it. If you want to go into the ranch business, there are golden opportunities. There are alfalfa lands susceptible of irrigation west of it. These are among the highest priced and most valuable lands in the United States, but when you cross the 98th meridian seeking for land watered by the rain from heaven on which you can grow a diversity of crops, keep your eyes peeled. You are in danger.

Finally, my brethren, as the preachers say, beware of any man who offers you a great deal for a very little. He is taking you for a sucker. The actual interest rate on money is what the savings banks will give you, from three to four per cent. A higher price than that is risk in collection and in the character of the securities. Whenever a man offers you more than that rate of interest, it is time to watch him. When he offers you more than this per cent on a dead sure thing, it is time to quit talking to him. Money is worth to you more than six per cent provided you will put it in good corn land, or good clover land, or good alfalfa land with plenty of water. It is worth more than six per cent to you in a good woven wire fence around your farm, in better conveniences about your house, in better improved machinery. Therefore, why put it in some other man's hands, take all the risks, and let him have the chance to garner in all profits?

We have said all these things before many a time, but the very large increase of new subscribers this year leads us to say this and many other things again on the principle of line upon line and precept upon precept. —Wallace's Farmer.

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